

Young artists make art for skate park

Freestanding skateboard replicas to greet park users

By **BILL BRADSHAW**
Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — Young artists are preparing their work to adorn the revamped skateboard park in Enterprise, which is scheduled to see work begin in August.

While art found at skateboard parks often comes in the form of graffiti, the works of 17-year-olds Lanie Huwe and Devin Coulson is anything but that.

“I hope we can, with this art, push that stereotype to the side and come up with a beautiful representation of what this park is going to become,” Ron Pickens said Friday, June 11. He’s the alternative high school teacher spearheading the park refurbishing.

Indeed, the girls have come up with unique works. Their works will be mounted on metal cut in the shape of a skateboard.

“It’ll be a freestanding piece of art to welcome those who come,” said Jill Dougherty, an artist Pickens recruited as a liaison to work with the girls.

“I’m just a person who likes art and I like kids,” Dougherty said. “Ron Pickens asked me if I would help with this art project. I have a background in art and I love working with kids. I think they’re so talented. My favorite thing in the world is to see kids of all ages create.”

She found a way to display the art.

“I took their art to the graphic designer, Crystal Newton, and she was an instrumental part of making this come to life,” Dougherty said. “She scanned all their work and put it on the design of the skateboards, which will then be erected in metal.”

Types of art

Huwe does traditional art, working in watercolors and acrylics. She showed some of her watercolors during a June 10 interview.

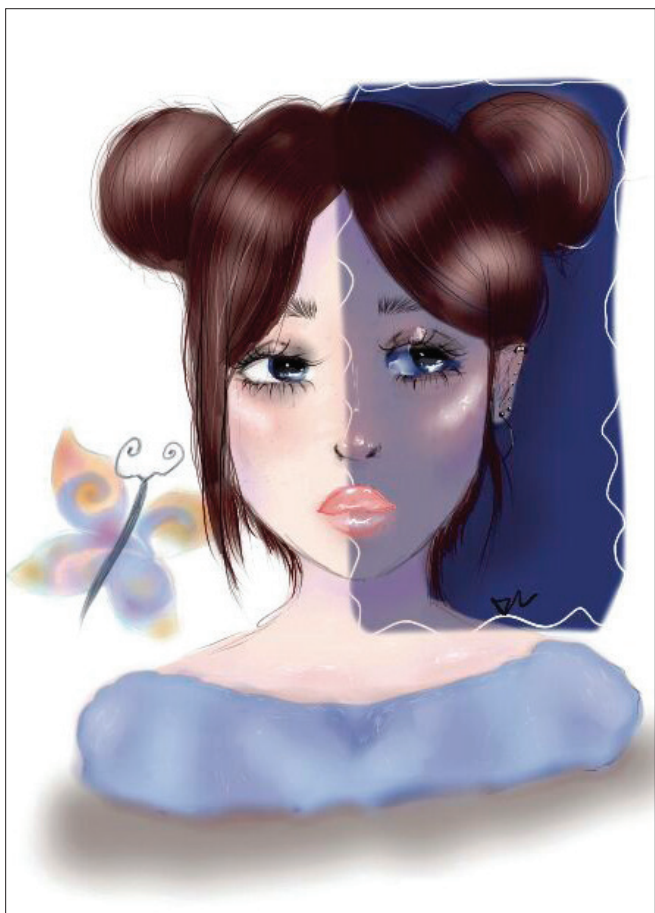
Coulson does digital art. “I connect my computer to a tablet and I can do all this with a pen” on the tablet, she said, adding that it still requires artistic skills.

“This is very different from traditional art,” she said. “The difference between digital art and traditional art is with digital, you have many different layers and you can build upon each layer, whereas with traditional art you build it all on one layer. There are a lot of different things you can play with in digital art. You can, for instance, do transparency



Bill Bradshaw/Wallowa County Chieftain

Wallowa County Alternative School students are preparing artwork to adorn the revamped skateboard park in Enterprise. From left are liaison Jill Dougherty, graphic artist Devin Coulson, painter Lanie Huwe and Xavier Dougherty, who helped provide ideas for the students to turn into art.



Devin Coulson/Contributed Photo

This is an example of the digital art created by 17-year-old Devin Coulson that will be used to decorate the revamped Enterprise skateboard park this summer.

and a lot of stuff like that.”

Both girls have attended the Alternative High School since November and are going into their senior year. Dougherty is impressed with their skills.

“When you look at all the art they have created, it just kind of oozes out from the girls,” she said.

Plans for the future

In fact, the girls’ artwork is likely to follow them beyond high school.

“I’m going to a two-year community college and then I’m going to a different college afterward,” Coulson said, adding that she’ll continue to focus on art in her studies. “Art’s definitely going to be an aspect of it, even on the side, if not the main focus.”

Huwe has a recipe for a more definite plan in the oven.

“I kind of want to be a baker, but you still have to do a lot of art in the baking stuff, like the pastry art and decorating cookies and things like that,” she said.

“I love doing that stuff. I just made my sister’s birthday cake.”

While the girls conceptualized most of the artwork for the park, some designs came from another source — Dougherty’s 8-year-old son, Xavier.

“My ideas were a jellyfish and, you know how skating makes you dizzy?” he asked, showing one painted by Huwe as a facsimile of an Oregon license plate with the word “Dizzy.”

Progress on the park

For several months, Pickens has been making plans to revitalize the skateboard park. Earlier this year, he sought funding from around town — including the Enterprise City Council — to upgrade the park, primarily aiming at adding a half-pipe. Then, on April 14, he told the council a community member stepped up with a donation of \$51,500. That brought the project to a \$60,000 value to totally revamp the park that would involve replacing everything there.

With the recent donation, another \$5,000 already pledged by Building Healthy Families, the project was just \$3,500 short of its goal, which the council agreed in April to provide.

That left the question of what to do with the current skatepark ramps. Pickens hopes — once the Enterprise park work is done — to see them moved to Wallowa, where he lives. He said the current ramps may be 20 years old, but they still have much life in them.

“I’d love to see them moved to Wallowa,” he told the council in April. “I live in Wallowa and I see a lack of opportunity for the kids there and it breaks my heart that we’re not actually doing this project for those kids in Wallowa. I feel like they’re so underserved there.”

Moving the ramps to Wallowa is still in the hope stage. Pickens said last week he’s putting any such plans on hold until the work at Enterprise is complete. However, Mayor Gary Hulse expressed concern June 10 that the city’s liability insurance may not cover such a feature. But, he said, that remains to be seen.

Pickens said work on the Enterprise park is slated to begin Aug. 2 and he’s appreciative that Dougherty stepped up to help with the artwork.

“I wanted her to lead the charge on it,” he said. “I was so thankful Jill was able to take the reins on this project.”

Woodlands and Watersheds Fest is ‘to-go’ again

Chieftain staff

WALLOWA COUNTY — For the second year in a row, Wallowa County’s Woodlands and Watersheds Festival is being conducted in a “to-go” format as guidance surrounding the coronavirus pandemic continues to evolve, according to the event’s website.

“As we continue to navigate our way back to hosting large gatherings, we have made the hard decision” for the to-go format, the website stated. “We just felt like a large gathering in June could still put our community and families at risk.”

From noon to 5 p.m. Friday, June 25, bag pickup locations full of family-related activities will be at three sites in the county. They include the Maxville Heritage Interpretive Center

at 103 N. Main St. in Joseph, at the Wallowa County Courthouse Gazebo at 101 S. River St. in Enterprise and at the Wallowa Public Library at 201 E. 1st St. in Wallowa.

There also will be a raffle families can enter when picking up the to-go bags that will offer local prizes.

The Woodlands and Watersheds Festival is a combined effort to celebrate, play, listen and learn about what makes our little corner of Oregon a wonderful place to live. Wallowa Resources and Maxville Heritage Interpretive Center are combining efforts once to again to bring the festival to the community. The goal is to enhance the experience our community loves so much and make the day even more enjoyable.

For more information, go online to <https://tinyurl.com/WandWFest>.

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